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and I were sitting smoking, thinking how happy we were to have such a good son. Oh! I thought my poor wife's heart would break when she saw him going. She fell on her knees, and begged them not to take the prop of her old age from her, for she thought he would never recover it. He had a fever long after, which my wife caught in attending him; for, poor woman! she never lay down the whole time, but still watching him. He recovered, but she never did; she is in a better place, so I ought not to fret. (*wiping his eyes.*)

*Tra.* And where is your son!

*Old M.* Oh! sir, he is with his poor mother, in heaven; for, as I told you before, sir, he joined the rebels: he thought he was serving his country, but when he saw the cruelty of his own party, he repented, and was coming to give up his arms, when a party of soldiers met him, and took him up; and when he would not inform, they shot him. Poor fellow, he thought it a mean and cowardly thing to be an informer. Well then, they came to my little cabin, and set it on fire. My little girl was burned to death, and old as I am, they would have killed me, only I happened to be out, for nothing was too bad for them to do. So, you see, sir, I had my sufferings; and many more, like me, were left without a child to close their eyes. So now, sir, I bid you good morning—that's your road.

SYLVIA.

For the Belfast Magazine.

I PERCEIVE that your pages are open to free discussion on literary subjects, and that the *shadow of a mighty name* affords no protection to the possessor of it, whether living or dead, from the censure of just criticism.

The paradoxes of Rousseau are probably known to your readers, by which he advocates the savage life in preference to the advantages of civilization. Some of your readers, perhaps, may not be acquainted with the secret history of his essay on the inequality of man, which he wrote in answer to the question proposed by the academy of Dijon. "What is the origin of the inequality among men? and, if it be

authorized by the law of nature?" He himself describes his sensations, on resolving to write in favour of the savage state, as rising to extacy; and that he was so penetrated with his subject, as to shed many tears. This is all very fine, but he appears only to have been an actor; for, in the memoirs of Marmontel, written by himself, we are assured, on the authority of Diderot, that Rousseau had at first designed to write in favour of civilization, and was resolved to exercise all his powers in its cause. He mentioned his design to Diderot, who observed, that other candidates would, doubtless, display the benefits derived from social improvements; and that it was a path in which he would not be distinguished from the dunces. "C'est un pont aux anes," (a bridge that every animal may pass) was the expression of Diderot. Rousseau changed his plan, and gratified his vanity and love of paradox, by writing in favour of the savage state. Rather than take the vulgar road, he whimsically adduces the advantages of nakedness, inclement seasons, ignorance the most profound, privations of all the comforts of social intercourse, and the society of animals, scarcely inferior to his favourite savage.

A READER.

For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.

I HAVE been your constant reader since the first publication of the Belfast Magazine. With some of your essays I have been highly pleased and instructed. I will trust to your candour to allow me to say, I have also seen some papers in the Magazine, which I do not admire; and which did not even please the class of readers for whom the tales were intended. Some of the tales want consistency of character, and I hope Maria will allow me to mention, a few objections to Rosa. Mrs. Woodley speaking of *Shayboy, knowed, sartaint, axing, and lurning* is not characteristic of English manners; the English have a different phraseology: such words are more used by the poorer classes of the Irish whose poverty too frequently prevents them from getting instruction.

Passing over some other things which I do not admire, I must say, I agree with Maria in the conclusion of the tale, when she speaks of scandal. I have sat present many times when I have been astonished at the malignant pleasure, some persons took in aspersing the characters of their neighbours, either by insinuations or more positive assertions. A diffidence of my own abilities has often prevented me from expressing the indignation I have felt at such conversation. While I thus condemn scandal, I must admit that a dread of public censure may have its use in making us careful to have our conduct and behaviour always regulated by the strictest propriety. If we are conscious that it is such as is proper we may be assured that even if scandal point her poisoned arrow at us, the tale will not be generally believed, and thus, to a certain degree we may live above the reach of censorious tongues, whose malice is best defeated by innocence, and the necessary caution to shun the appearance as well as the reality of error, in the manner of conducting ourselves. Female honour is of a peculiarly delicate nature; indiscretion may lead us to become really vicious, it often leads us to have the appearance of being so without the actual guilt. If we are sometimes falsely censured, the consciousness of our own integrity and uprightness of conduct will support us under the insinuations and aspersions of the malevolent and censorious.

S.Y.

*For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.*

SOME years ago when travelling in England, I twice passed through the Potteries of Staffordshire; I shall give the result of my observations.—I first passed them in the night; the flames issuing from the furnaces had a curious effect, when viewed for the first time; I was also struck with an idea of the great wealth of England, and wondered less at her capabilities to carry on her destructive wars, when I beheld such vast capital invested in one single article of manufacture, the earthen ware, which in comparison of some others, would rather appear of minor importance.

These potteries lie in the north west part of Staffordshire, and form a nearly connected extension of villages for several miles, under different names, as Burslem, Hanley-Green, Etruria, &c.

From these extensive manufactories are supplied not only the common articles of earthen ware now in so general use amongst all ranks but also the finer kinds both for use and ornament, which from the inventive genius of the celebrated Wedgewood and others, have attained to such hitherto unrivalled perfection.

My second visit through this extremely populous quarter, was on a summer's evening: I was surprized to find such crowds of people in a state of idleness, men, women, and boys: many of whom, even boys not exceeding 15 or 16, in a state of gross intoxication. I had previously formed an opinion that in England, the people were comparatively more sober than in Ireland: I inquired if it was fair time, or any particular festival; but was answered in the negative: I found it was only St. Monday, and that the workmen finding they could subsist on the high wages which they received for working during part of the week, squandered their earnings in this pernicious manner. I had formerly been a strong advocate for high wages to the working classes of the community, in hopes they might tend to increase their comforts and elevate their views to some higher attainment of intellectual knowledge. But I was somewhat confounded in my former theories, and saw cause to consider that high wages often produce a contrary effect, unless those who receive them have been previously trained to make a good use of them, and to employ their leisure for the purposes of real improvement. It was necessary however to guard myself from misanthropic views, and having found my former theory in part untenable, from falling into the opposite extreme, of considering the working classes merely as beasts of burden, to produce profit to their employers, the rich capitalists. I lamented that the present system of education and public instruction, was not better calculated for fitting the various ranks of society to discharge their respective